

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1-19. (canceled)

20. (new) A method of wrapping a foil hood with an open end and a closed end around a load having a top and a plurality of vertical sides meeting at vertically extending corners, the method comprising the steps of sequentially;

a) positioning a respective tensioning finger immediately adjacent each of the corners in an inner position above the load;

b) gathering the hood into a plurality of vertically stacked folds and fitting the gathered hood over the fingers in the inner positions of the fingers with the open end of the hood open downward;

c) engaging a holding device against one of the fingers to clamp the hood thereagainst;

d) spreading the fingers outward away from the load into outer positions spaced from the load and thereby transversely stretching the hood while clamping the hood with the holding device;

e) disengaging the holding device and thereby unclamping the hood; and

f) moving the fingers downward along the load with the holding device out of engagement through the hood with the respective one of the fingers such that the closed end of the hood

22 engages on the top of the load and the hood is pulled upward fold-
23 by-fold off the fingers through a predetermined position at which
24 generally all of the folds have been pulled off the fingers to an
25 end position at which the hood is stretched vertically over the
26 load and all of the folds have been pulled off the fingers.

1 21. (new) The load-wrapping method defined in claim 20
2 further comprising the step during downward movement of the fingers
3 of displacing the fingers inward into intermediate positions
4 outward of the inner positions and inward of the outer positions.

1 22. (new) The load-wrapping method defined in claim 21
2 wherein the fingers are moved continuously inward from the outer
3 positions to the intermediate positions during downward movement of
4 the fingers.

1 23. (new) The load-wrapping method defined in claim 21
2 wherein the fingers are moved inward in at least one step from the
3 outer positions to the intermediate positions during downward
4 movement of the fingers.

1 24. (new) The load-wrapping method defined in claim 20,
2 further comprising the step after step e) and during step f) of:
3 once the predetermined position has been reached, engag-
4 ing the holding device against the respective finger to clamp the

5 hood thereagainst, whereby further downward of the fingers with the
6 hood clamped between the holding device and the one finger verti-
7 cally stretches the hood.

1 25. (new) The load-wrapping method defined in claim 24
2 wherein each finger is provided with one such holding element and
3 the holding elements are moved jointly into and out of engagement
4 through the hood with the respective fingers.

1 26. (new) A method of wrapping a foil hood with an open
2 end and a closed end around a load having a top and a plurality of
3 vertical sides meeting at vertically extending corners, the method
4 comprising the steps of sequentially;

5 positioning a respective tensioning finger immediately
6 adjacent each of the corners in an inner position above the load;
7 gathering the hood into a plurality of vertically stacked
8 folds and fitting the gathered hood over the fingers in the inner
9 positions of the fingers with the open end of the hood open down-
10 ward;

11 spreading the fingers outward away from the load into
12 outer positions spaced from the load and thereby transversely
13 stretching the hood;

14 moving the fingers downward along the load such that the
15 closed end of the hood engages on the top of the load and the hood
16 is pulled upward fold-by-fold off the fingers while simultaneously

17 displacing the fingers toward each other into intermediate posi-
18 tions lying outward of the inner positions and inward of the outer
19 positions.

1 27. (new) The load-wrapping method defined in claim 26
2 wherein the fingers are moved inward continuously from the outer to
3 the intermediate positions during downward movement of the fingers
4 along the load.

1 28. (new) The load-wrapping method defined in claim 26
2 wherein the fingers are moved inward in steps from the outer to the
3 intermediate positions during downward movement of the fingers
4 along the load..

1 29. (new) The load-wrapping method defined in claim 26
2 wherein the fingers are moved downward to a predetermined position
3 at which generally all of the folds have been pulled off the
4 fingers, the method further comprising the steps of:

5 engaging a holding device against at least one of fingers
6 to clamp the hood thereagainst when the predetermined position has
7 been reached; and thereafter

8 moving the fingers further downward with the hood clamped
9 between the holding device and the one finger to vertically stretch
10 the hood.